

## IMPROVING HEALTH FOR WOMEN



### DO YOU RECEIVE THESE RECOMMENDED HEALTH SCREENINGS?

- Yearly blood pressure reading
- Cholesterol beginning at age 21 then every 5 years if normal
- Blood sugar beginning at age 45 then every 3 years if normal (earlier if at risk)
- Dental examination and cleaning every 6 months
- Vision and hearing screening (yearly after age 60)
- Monthly self breast examination and yearly clinical exam by a health care professional
- Yearly screening mammogram beginning at age 40
- Yearly Pap and pelvic examination (or as recommended by your health care provider)
- Yearly ovarian cancer screening beginning at age 50 (age 25 if family history of disease)
- Stool test for blood annually, Sigmoidoscopy/Colonoscopy every 5 years beginning at age 50
- Tetanus shot every 10 years
- Yearly flu shot beginning at age 50 (earlier if at risk)
- Pneumonia vaccine once after age 65 (earlier if at risk)
- Rubella (measles) vaccine once if not already immune
- Hepatitis B series once between ages 18–64 if indicated
- Baseline electrocardiogram (EKG) over age 40 if recommended by health care provider
- Ovarian Cancer Screening at age 50 (age 25 if family history) (Locations: UKMC, Hardin, Mason, Floyd, and Pulaski County Health Centers) call 1-800-766-8279 for appt.



### UNDERSTANDING AND MANAGING MENOPAUSE (“THE CHANGE ”)

As a woman enters her middle years of life she may experience physical and emotional changes caused by the normal decrease of a hormone produced by the ovaries called estrogen (es-tro-gen). This decrease in estrogen takes place over a few years (perimenopause) before the last menstrual period (menopause). Symptoms of lower estrogen levels include heavy and/or irregular periods, hot flashes (“flashes”), night sweats, mood swings, trouble sleeping, vaginal dryness resulting in painful sex, and inability to concentrate or remember things.

- Hormone replacement for a short period of time may be an option for some women to help decrease bothersome symptoms of menopause.
- Recent research has shown an increase risk of breast cancer, stroke, and heart attacks in women who have taken hormones over a long period of time (5 years and longer)
- For more information on hormone replacement, discuss with your health care provider.



### OSTEOPOROSIS PREVENTION AND TREATMENT

As women enter menopause and beyond, bones tend to become thinner and weaker as a result of less estrogen and can lead to a condition called osteoporosis (os-teo-por-o-sis) or “brittle bone disease”. Thin, weak bones often lead to breaks in the hip, spine, or wrists and cause a typical hunchback appearance. Osteoporosis usually doesn’t have any symptoms until a bone break is discovered. A painless test called a **bone density test** can determine if osteoporosis is present and if medication is needed. Discuss the possible need for this test with your health care provider.

- Research has shown that weight bearing exercise and a dietary intake (or supplement) of 1000–1500mg calcium and 400-800 IU of vitamin D helps to keep bones stronger.
- Smoking increases the risk of getting osteoporosis



## DOMESTIC VIOLENCE/SEXUAL ASSAULT: IT WON'T JUST GO AWAY

Domestic violence is physical, verbal, or emotional mistreatment between two people. It can happen to anyone regardless of education, income, race, age, religion, or marital status and it is against the law.

Abusers don't stop in spite of their promises and regrets but, according to research and statistics, over time the abuse almost always gets worse. If you find yourself in a situation where you or your children are being mistreated, get in touch with someone who can help such as a social worker, physician, nurse, counselor, or another trusted individual. Call the National Domestic Violence Hotline at 1-800-799-SAFE (7233) for more information. Always have a safe place to go if needed and in an emergency situation call 911.

Sexual Assault is any sexual act without your consent, with a person who may be a stranger, acquaintance, spouse, family member, or intimate partner. Call the National Sexual Assault Hotline at 1-800-656-HOPE (4673) for more information. The Abuse Reporting Hotline is 1-800-752-6200.



## HEART ATTACKS, STROKES, AND LUNG CANCER ARE NOT JUST FOR MEN!

- FACT:** Heart disease is 15 times more likely to cause a woman's death than breast cancer
- FACT:** A woman is more likely to die from a heart attack or a stroke than a man
- FACT:** Lung cancer is the number one cancer killer in women
- FACT:** Diabetes is more common in women & increases the chance of dying from heart disease
- FACT:** Being overweight increases the chance of developing diabetes, high blood pressure & heart disease
- FACT:** Smoking increases the chance of osteoporosis, high blood pressure, heart disease, blood vessel disease, cancer of the mouth, throat, lung & cervix, and lung conditions such as asthma, emphysema, and bronchitis. Children exposed to second hand smoke are more likely to have ear infections, asthma, lung infections, as well as an increased risk of dying from SIDS (crib death).



## STAY ACTIVE TO IMPROVE YOUR HEALTH AND MOOD

Exercise is beneficial to both the body and mind by decreasing anxiety, controlling weight and blood pressure, boosts the immune system, elevates the mood, maintains bone health and increases strength and flexibility, improves sleep patterns, reduces arthritis pain, helps control blood sugar, and decreases the risk of heart disease and stroke. Research has proven that low to moderate physical activity, 30 minutes–1 hour on most days per week, can dramatically improve your health. Examples of low-moderate exercise include brisk walking, swimming, yard work, dancing, bowling, gardening, tennis, bicycling, and golfing. Always check with your health care provider before beginning an exercise program.

## A SIMPLE RECIPE FOR HEALTHY LIVING

- ☞ Stop smoking and avoid secondary smoke (Ask your health department provider for assistance)
- ☞ Take a daily multivitamin
- ☞ Exercise regularly
- ☞ Maintain a normal weight, blood pressure, cholesterol and blood sugar levels
- ☞ Eat at least 5 fruits or vegetables every day (adequate diet also includes low fat/high fiber foods)
- ☞ Limit or avoid alcohol
- ☞ Safe proof your home to prevent accidents
- ☞ Have a yearly physical examination
- ☞ Always use your seatbelt
- ☞ Follow your health care provider's instructions
- ☞ Set *realistic* goals for yourself and have some fun!